

REMARKS

Summary of the Office Action

Claims 24, 28 and 35 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,309,219 to Robert.

Claim 25 stands objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim.

The Examiner is thanked for indicating that claims 1-23 and claim 34 have been allowed and claim 25 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Summary of the Response to the Office Action

Applicants have canceled claims 24, 28, 32, 33 and 35 without prejudice or disclaimer, and have rewritten claim 25 in independent form. Accordingly, claims 1-23, 25 and 34 remain pending for further consideration.

All Claims Define Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 24, 28 and 35 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,309,219 to Robert. Claim 25 stands objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. The rejection and objection are respectfully traversed for at least the following reasons.

Since Applicants have canceled claims 24, 28, 32, 33 and 35 without prejudice or disclaimer, the rejection of claims 24, 28 and 35 have rendered moot. Also, Applicants have

rewritten claim 25 in independent form by including all of the limitation of its base claim 24, and therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that newly-amended independent claim 25 is allowable.

Further, the Office Action has indicated that claims 1-23 and 34 are allowed.

- Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully assert that
- the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) and objection to claim 25 should be withdrawn, and the instant application is in clear condition for allowance.

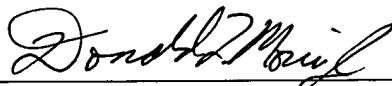
CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants earnestly solicit the issuance of a Notice of Allowability. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative to expedite prosecution.

If there are any other fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-0310. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 not accounted for above, such an extension is requested and the fee should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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